

Sexting, Snapchat & Selfies: What Parents Need to Know About Teens Online



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My perspective

- **Public health**
 - Data, policies, context
- **Community**
 - Geography matters
- **Behavioral Science**
 - Preventing disease and promoting health
- **Culture**
- **Love**

Tonight's Talk

- 1) Articulate the importance of understanding current use of technology by children and youth;
- 2) Describe the risks and opportunities new media present for children and youth;
- 3) Understand the critical and protective role parents and adults can and should play for children and youth in their interactions with media; and
- 4) Answer questions, have discussion!



What crazy things did you do when you were a teenager?

Be careful what you post on Facebook. Whatever you do, it will be pulled up later in your life.

President Obama, September 8, 2009 Wakefield, VA





How do we support children and youth in our community?

I'm twice as likely not to graduate high school because you had me as a teen.

KIDS OF TEEN MOMS ARE TWICE AS LIKELY NOT TO GRADUATE THAN KIDS WHOSE MOMS WERE OVER AGE 22.

Text 'NOTNOW' to 877877 for the real price of teen pregnancy.
For more information, visit www.notnow.org or call 1-877-877-8777.



What's the danger?



Boston University School of Public Health



*Louis CK,
Conan Sept 2013



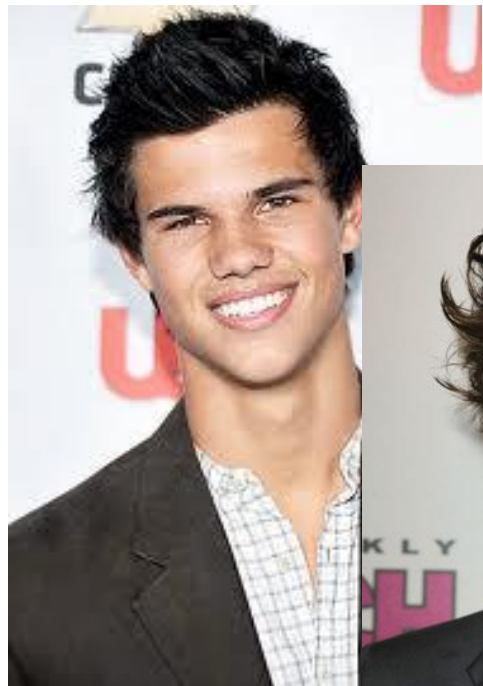
Areas of concern

- Sleep
- Weight
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Consumerism
- Risky sexual activities
- Cyberbullying
- Unsafe online communities (Pro-“Ana” sites, etc.)
- Gaming

■ Association \neq causation

Youth who are at risk are at risk online





**Current youth
health
messaging**





Web [Images](#) [Groups](#) [News](#) [Froogle](#) **New!**

teen sex

Search: ☒ the web ☐ pages from the UK

A new day, a new app

- Key issues: anonymity, novelty, “be the first”



facebook



ask.fm



Our research can't keep up.

- 93% of 12- to 17-year-olds use the Internet
- 71% use social networks
- 78% of 13- to 17-year-olds have cell phones. 37% smartphone
- 20% of students 15-18 report having sent a nude/seminude picture/video or sexual text only message (2013)
- 57% of online teenagers post their own “user-generated content” on the Web, including photos, stories, art work, audio and video.

A source for “information”

- If adults can't distinguish fact from fiction in media, how can youth?



Bullying in 2015

- **Sticks and Stones: Defeating the Culture of Bullying and Rediscovering the Power of Character and Empathy**
- By Emily Bazelon
- No break – never get to go “home” and get away
- Schools are still catching up in policy or monitoring
- Public humiliation
- Anonymity of certain apps and websites

Youth Sensitivity

- Youth are developing (physically, emotionally, socially, brain)
- Youth differ in their ability to absorb, detoxify, and excrete pollutants; including “mental pollutants”
- Youth pass through critical developmental periods when they may be especially sensitive to environmental agents



- All youth will end up online at some point.
- Youth who are at risk are at risk online as well.

However!

- There is great opportunity as well.
- Isolated youth
- Access to support
- Access to health messages that are targeted, specific

Key elements of child development

- Support
- Empowerment
- Boundaries and expectations
- Constructive use of time
- Positive values
- Positive identity
- Commitment to learning
- Social competence

Developmental risk

- Self-control in progress
 - **Impulsivity**
 - Excessive **sensation-seeking**
- Short-sightedness
- Failure to think ahead
- Susceptibility to influence of others
- Orientation toward immediate gratification
- Yes, they really are performing.



Developmental opportunity

- Urge to “belong”
 - Strong sense of right and wrong
 - Still a blank canvas
 - Craving feedback
 - Craving boundaries
- Caring relationships
 - High expectations
 - Opportunities for meaningful participation
 - INCREASE SOCIAL CAPITAL

Sophie's Suggestions

- Hold off on smart phones as long as possible.
- Bring the computer out of the bedroom and back in to the kitchen.
- Make rules about Facebook – friend your child, and get smart about how it works.
- Try not to panic about all the new apps.
- Build relationships with other parents.
- Be brave. We can do hard things.

Contact

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